

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY QARSAW

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 4122

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, HU

SUBJ: "THE KADAR REGIME"

1. AGAIN AND AGAIN EMBASSY BUDAPEST HAS NOTED THAT THE DEPARTMENT AND SOME OTHER WASHINGTON AGENCIES REFER TO THE MAGYAR LEADERSHIP AS "THE KADAR REGIME" OR "THE HUNGARIAN REGIME". SUCH PHRASING IS IN OUR VIEW PEJORATIVE AND EMOTION-TINGED. IT IS ONE THAT THIS MISSION DOES NOT EMPLOY. IT IS ONE THAT, AS WE READ THE TRAFFIC, OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN POSTS RARELY USE WHEN ALLUDING TO THE FIRST SECRETARY OF THE HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS'S PARTY AND HIS COLLEAGUES. IT CAME TO OUR ATTENTION AGAIN JUST A FEW DAYS AGO (IN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCE BRIEF 194-74, ITEM NUMBER 5): "5. HUNGARY-ROMANIA: THE HUNGARIAN REGIME TRIED TO CREATE A WARM ATMOSPHERE
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FOR ROMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MACOVESCU'S VISIT TO

BUDAPEST FROM DECEMBER 8-11." THIS INTELLIGENCE BRIEF APPEARS TO BE BASED, AT LEAST IN PART, ON BUDAPEST 4027 WHICH DID NOT USE THAT PHRASE.

2. FRANKLY, EMBASSY BUDAPEST IS PUZZLED. WE HAVE CONSULTED WEBSTER, FUNK AND WAGNALL AND AVAILABLE U.S. GOVERNMENT GLOSSARIES IN AN EFFORT TO DISCOVER WHAT CONSTITUTES A "REGIME". WE HAVE NOTED THAT WASHINGTON RARELY APPLIES THIS TAG TO THOSE WHO HOLD SWAY IN SEVERAL OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN NATIONS WHERE THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SYSTEMS ARE FAR HARSHER AND FAR MORE STALINIST THAN IN THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC. WHILE EMBASSY BUDAPEST ENTERTAINS NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE TOTALITARIAN AND REPRESSIVE ASPECTS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO WHICH IT IS ACCREDITED, WE DO HOLD THAT KADAR, LOSONCZI, LAZAR AND THEIR CURRENT COMRADES ARE LESS ILLIBERAL AND LESS INHUMANE IN THEIR APPROACH TO THE DAILY LIFE PROBLEMS OF THEIR PEOPLE THAN MOST OTHER PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS WITHIN THE WARSAW PACT AREA. EVEN THOSE HUNGARIANS (BOTH RESIDENT AND EXPATRIATE) WHO FEEL NO AFFECTION FOR THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP OR FOR ITS POLICIES RECOGNIZE AND ADMIT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS THAT HUNGARY AND ITS PEOPLE ARE MUCH BETTER OFF THAN MOST REPEAT MOST OF THEIR EASTERN EUROPEAN NEIGHBORS. THOSE HUNGARIAN HUNGARIANS WITH WHOM THE EMBASSY HAS CONTACT -- AND THE NUMBER ALTHOUGH NOT VAST IS STEADILY INCREASING -- DO NOT REFER TO KADAR AND TO THEIR GOVERNMENT IN SUCH DISPARAGING TERMS.

3. THE REPEATED USE OF THIS PHRASE BY WASHINGTON DRAFTSMEN MAY COMPLY WITH SOME POLICY DIRECTIVE OF WHICH EMBASSY BUDAPEST IS UNAWARE. BUT IT DOES SEEM ODD WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THAT IN EASTERN EUROPE (AND ON OTHER CONTINENTS, TOO) THERE HAVE BEEN AND THERE STILL EXIST POLITICAL LEADERS WHO HAVE PUBLICIZED THEMSELVES, SUBLIMATED THEMSELVES, AND DEVELOPED THE SO-CALLED "CULT OF PERSONALITY" IN HIGH DEGREE. JANOS KADAR, A MAN OF RETIRING NATURE, HAS ON THE OTHER HAND CHOSEN TO AVOID THE SPOTLIGHT'S GLARE AND TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS CONFIDENTIAL

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AND UNFLAMBOYANT. ONE RARELY SEES HIS PICTURE ON PUBLIC DISPLAY, EVEN IN HSWP HEADQUARTERS; HE DELIVERS NO THUNDERING HOUR-LONG ORATIONS; HE CONTINUES TO BE WHAT HE HAS BEEN SINCE 1956 -- THE MOST POWERFUL POLITICAL FIGURE ON THE HUNGARIAN POLITICAL SCENE, BUT ONE WHO PREFERS TO REMAIN IN THE BACKGROUND. AND THE HUNGARIAN HUNGARIANS WHOM WE IN EMBASSY BUDAPEST MEET SEEM TO PREFER IT THAT WAY: NO ONE FAWNS OVER

JANOS KADAR IN ADULATORY LANGUAGE HAILING HIM AS A SAVIOR; NOR DOES ANYONE WHOM WE HAVE HEARD CURSE AND REVILE THE FIRST SECRETARY AS THE OFFSPRING OF BEELZEBUB.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE PROVIDE RATIONALE FOR CONTINUING USE OF "KADAR REGIME" AND "HUNGARIAN REGIME" WHEN REFERRING TO GOH.
MCAULIFFE

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NNN

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